EXAMINER'S
SEARCH NOTES


US006446871B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Buckley et al.

(10) **Patent No.: US 6,446,871 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent: Sep. 10, 2002**

(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR STORING REFERENCE CODES IN A WRITING INSTRUMENT AND FOR RETRIEVING INFORMATION IDENTIFED BY THE REFERENCE CODES**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **09/335,119**

(22) Filed: **Jun. 17, 1999**

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 08/994,684, filed on Dec. 19, 1997, now Pat. No. 5,955,719.
(60) Provisional application No. 60/089,891, filed on Jun. 19, 1998.

(51) **Int. Cl.**[7] **G06K 7/10**
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **235/472.03**; 235/472.01; 235/462.45
(58) **Field of Search** 235/472.02, 472.03, 235/472.01, 462.49, 462.43, 462.46

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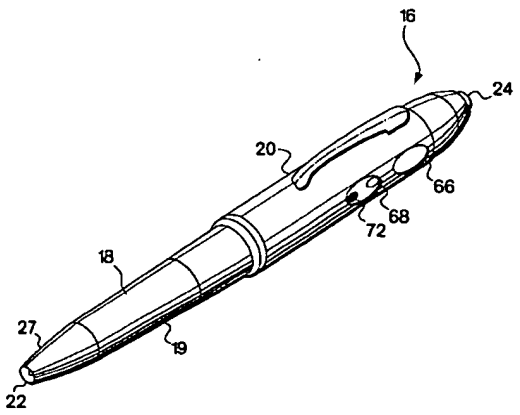
(57) **ABSTRACT**

An interactive data transfer system and method is provided. In embodiments of the invention, the data transfer system includes a computing device, and a data well for interfacing with an elongate instrument, the elongate instrument having a data transfer end with a data transfer tip. The data well has a housing with an opening for receiving the data transfer tip of the elongate instrument. The data well also has a communications port operatively coupled to the computing device to provide data to the computing device, and the data well has a data communication device contained in the housing for interfacing with the data transfer tip when the data transfer end of the elongate instrument is received in the opening The computing device is programmed to receive data from the data well. The received data includes data indicative of at least one address on a global communications network. The computer device is also programmed, upon receipt of the at least one address, to launch an application to retrieve information related to the at least one address from the global communications network and transmit such information to the computing device.

31 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets



US-PAT-NO: 6446871

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 6446871 B1

See image for Certificate of Correction

TITLE: Method and apparatus for storing reference codes in a writing instrument and for retrieving information identifed by the reference codes

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Detailed Description Text - DETX (12):

In addition to the above applications, a user or stock broker may secure the purchase or sale of stocks or other securities over, for example, the Internet, by performing the following actions. The user scans a code which corresponds to a particular stock or other security. The user also **scans a code for a buy,** sell or other type of trade. In addition, the user scans another code for the number of shares of such security to be traded. Obviously, a single bar code may be implemented to perform all three categories of information desired.

EXAMINER'S
SEARCH NOTES

US005431250A

United States Patent [19]

Schlamp

[11] Patent Number: 5,431,250

[45] Date of Patent: Jul. 11, 1995

[54] SYSTEM FOR THE SALE OF PRODUCTS

[75] Inventor: Hans Schlamp, München, Germany

[73] Assignee: Accumulata Verwaltungsgesellschaft, Munich, Germany

[21] Appl. No.: 63,828

[22] Filed: May 20, 1993

[30] Foreign Application Priority Data

May 22, 1992 [DE] Germany 42 17 045.1

[51] Int. Cl.[6] E04H 3/04

[52] U.S. Cl. 186/55; 235/381

[58] Field of Search ..... 186/52, 55, 56; 340/825.35; 364/478, 479; 235/381, 383, 91 L

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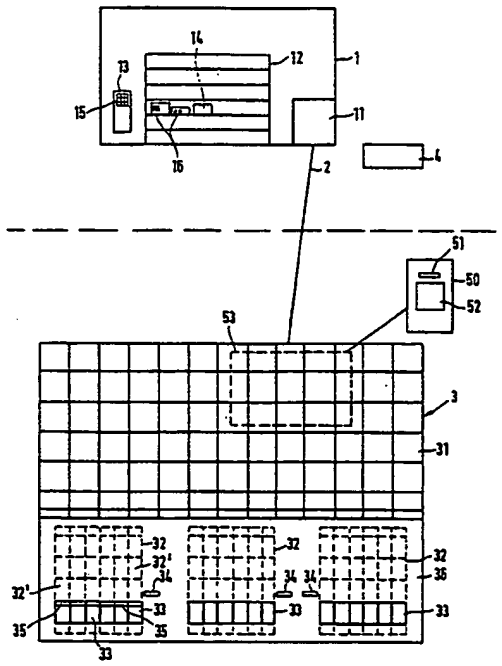
Primary Examiner—Frank E. Werner
Assistant Examiner—Scott L. Lowe
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Morgan & Finnegan

[57] ABSTRACT

The invention relates to a sales system for the sale and delivery of products. In connection therewith, a sample shop is located at a first location. A product distribution station is located at a second location, at a distance from the first location, and which is linked to the sample shop via a line for the purpose of data exchange. Single specimens of products are offered in the sample shop in the form of visual copies with information which can be queried. In the sample shop, each client receives a query device together with a data entry device. The client queries the information which corresponds to the visual copy by means of the query device and enters the number of items desired by him of the products which correspond to the visual copy using the data entry device. After receiving a collection card, the client goes to a product distribution station in order to collect the products about which information is communicated via the line concerning the desired products and the number of items together with information which identifies the client which is also to be found on the collection card.

15 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets



US-PAT-NO: 5431250

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 5431250 A

TITLE: System for the sale of products

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (8):

Especially advantageously, a client receives a scanning device or a similar arrangement in a sample shop in a downtown area with which he goes from shelf to shelf in order to make a selection from the products which are offered or from pictures of these products. Once he has decided to **buy an article, he scans** the bar code, which is arranged on the sample of the article or on the picture or on the shelf in the vicinity of the article, using the scanning device and types the number of items desired by him onto the keyboard of the scanning device. After the selection has taken place, he hands the scanning device in at the cash register and pays the amount corresponding to his purchases which is derived from the data which are stored in the scanning device. The client then obtains a collection card with which, after leaving the downtown area by means of the public transportation system and travelling to the periphery of the city, he acquires his products in an extremely simple and practical manner and can then load them into his car which is parked there. The product distribution station contains storage halls in which the products offered in the sample shops are, for example, contained on high shelves or similar arrangements. The product distribution station is connected on-line to the sample shop via, for example, the public telephone network so that a message can go from the sample shop to the product distribution station concerning the products that must be made ready for the client. The staff in the product distribution station then removes these products from the storage area and makes them ready for collection in special distribution devices. These distribution devices are advantageously arranged in such a way that the client can automatically remove the products which are desired by him from one or more distribution apertures after inserting his collection card in a reading device. It is especially advantageous in that storage areas, which are located at the periphery, are less expensive than corresponding storage areas in the downtown area because of the lower cost per square meter of ground. In addition, the products can be held ready in these storage halls without expensive decoration schemes.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (3):

Original specimens of products or pictures and/or specifications of these products are offered on, for example, shelves 12 or similar arrangements as visual copies 14 in the sample shop 1. On entering the sample shop 1, a purchaser receives a scanning device 13 with a keyboard 15 and a memory. Using this scanning device 13, the purchaser goes to the shelf 12 in order to select the desired products after considering these products in accordance with the visual copies 14. When a purchaser wants to **buy** a particular article, he scans the bar code 16 on the visual copy 14' in question using the scanning device 13 and enters the number of items which are desired to be purchased via the keyboard 15 of the scanning device 13. This information is stored in the memory of the scanning device 13. Once a purchaser has scanned the bar code 16 of one or more visual copies 14 using his scanning device 13 in this manner and has entered, in each case, the number of items desired via the keyboard 15, he goes to the cash register 11 of the sample shop 1. Here--or already prior to this in a computer in the scanning device 13--the purchase costs are ascertained on the basis of the bar code information and the number of items entered into the computer or the data that are stored in the scanning device which were entered by the client are read and an invoice is compiled, or printed on the basis thereof. After paying with cash or by check etc., the purchaser obtains at the cash register 11 a collection card 4 in the form of a data carrier which is, for example, a bar code card or a magnetic card. At a later time, the purchaser can identify, with the help of this collection card 4, the products desired by him for collection at the product distribution station 3.